



NEWS RELEASE

National Park Service

Lowell National Historical Park, 67 Kirk Street, Lowell, MA 01852-1029 www.nps.gov/lowe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

REQUESTS CANAL DRAINDOWN

TO COMPLETE GATEHOUSE RESTORATION WORK

(Lowell, MA) From July 10-21, visitors to Lowell National Historical Park will get a chance to see Lowell's canal system in an unusual way—without water—allowing them to answer for themselves the often-asked question, "How deep are those canals?" A two-week canal draindown is planned to take effect at 6:00 a.m. on July 10 and continue through to 6:00 p.m. on July 21, 2000.

The purpose of the two-week draindown is to allow the Park, through the National Park Service Northeast Cultural Resources Center, to reconstruct below-water structural supports for the historic Swamp Locks Gatehouse (across Dutton Street from the American Textile History Museum). The drain-down is being coordinated closely with Boott Hydropower's ongoing power generating operations. It is scheduled during the typical low-water season of the Merrimack River, which occurs during the summer, in an effort to minimize the impact to those with water rights or interests affected by the draindown. Commencement of the draindown period is, however, subject to weather and system operating conditions and will be confirmed approximately 36 hours in advance. Reconstruction of the gatehouse building above water will follow in August and September.

Lowell National Historical Park summer programs will be altered to both accommodate and to highlight the gatehouse restoration work.

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ADD ONE Lowell Canal Draindown

The Swamp Locks Dam and Gatehouse complex are located below the convergence of the historic Pawtucket, Merrimack, Western and Hamilton canals, which are recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior as a National Historic Landmark and listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The center "deep gate" section of the complex was constructed in 1841 and the flanking north and south spillway gatehouses were built by 1859.

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Prepared June 22, 2000